

health insurance, some system whereby the physicians, surgeons will be paid out of a public till, and, ladies and gentlemen, we are not going to like that. We are not going to like it any better than those of us in agriculture like the way we are being treated today almost as a public utility. So before you cast your vote on this, take a look at it very carefully, and then look back on your own actions the past five months, and the past years that you have been here, and see if you have done everything you could do during that period of time to help hold down health care costs. If not, regardless of how you vote on this resolution, I would ask you to adopt a little resolution of your own that in the future you will take a closer look at those bills which cause health care costs to escalate. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. I have been told that the cookies over here are compliments of the Governor, so I didn't know they were there, maybe you didn't either, but there is some delicious cookies over there I understand. Senator Wesely, please, followed by Senator Abboud.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. President and members, I am not trying to give Senator Hannibal and the Appropriations Committee necessarily a hard time on this. It is just other evidence about how serious a problem we have with health care costs, and my concern is that we are out of time, I guess we haven't the option to deal with this, but it is this Legislature that has to deal with health care costs. We are the ones that have to develop the policies and have the responsibility to come up with the payment for the different costs involved. We have already funded over a hundred million dollars, well, actually, it didn't turn out that way because we didn't do the indigent care bill, which we will and should do eventually, but, nevertheless, we were talking about that level of increased funding for health care costs, and a big chunk of that was on this health insurance policy for our state employees. We have got to find a way to deal with this problem and I do appreciate the money put into the budget to do the plan and to work with the Personnel Department in studying this, but we have got not just a problem with the insurance program that we have got for our employees, but we have got across the board, every employer across the state is facing this, and I know that from personal experience. And so somehow we have got to get a grip on it, and I am just pointing this out that I think the Legislature has got ultimately to get a handle on this, and that is why I am raising